



The South India CHURCHMAN



The Magazine of the Church of South India

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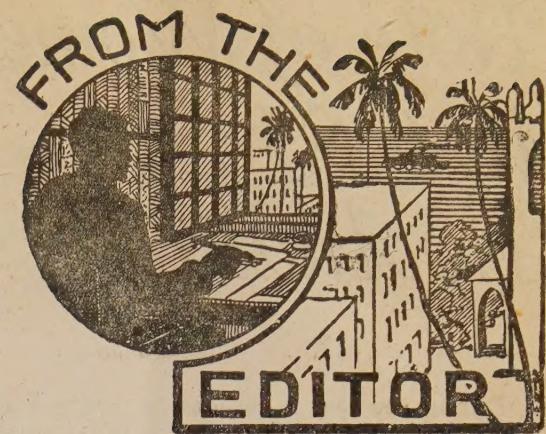
CSI Anniversary

On the twenty-seventh of this month the Church of South India celebrates its thirty-second anniversary. It is an occasion for all of us to praise and thank God for the miraculous way in which He has inspired and led the various uniting Churches to die unto denominationalism and be reborn in the form of the new united Church of South India. When this new Church was born thirty-two years ago it was hailed as a great and momentous event in the history of Church Union Movement.

Ever since its inauguration in 1947 the new Church has grown and developed so well that the prophets of gloom who foretold that the uniting Churches would fall apart sooner or later have been proved wrong. None of the original constituents of the Union has thought in terms of secession. On the contrary the Union has been extended by the addition of the North Tamil Church Council in 1950, the Christian Reformed Church in 1958, the Kannada Pastorates of the Bombay Diocese and subsequently the Bombay Karnataka and South Kanara Councils of the United Basel Mission Church. The recent accession of the Anglican Diocese of Nandyal has almost completed the process of union with the exception of a few parishes of the Telugu Church Council which still remain separate from the Rayalaseema Diocese. Thus during the last thirty-two years the CSI has grown as to be reckoned as one of the leading Churches in the East.

We should also remember on this occasion that the unity to which the CSI is committed is not restricted to organisational unity and the growth of mutual goodwill and co-operation between the different denominational Churches which were separate before. It is good that the CSI has achieved the organisational and administrative unity under the aegis of the Synod and with the Bishop as the Head of the Diocese and symbol of unity in the Church. The unique pattern of episcopacy and Church administration adopted by the CSI has attracted much appreciation from different quarters and it has contributed not a little to the staying-together of the uniting Churches. But we should ask : Is this enough ?

The founding Fathers wanted the CSI to commit itself not only to administrative and organisational unity and to the task of fostering a unity and goodwill among the different Churches but to spiritual unity without which the former remain as empty shells. This call to spiritual unity is clearly set forth in the Governing Principles of the CSI wherein it is laid down : 'The Church of South India believes that the unity of His Church for which Christ prayed is a unity in Him and in the Father through the Holy Spirit, and is therefore fundamentally a reality of the spiritual realm. It seeks the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. But this unity of the spirit must find expression in the faith and order of the Church, in its worship, in its organization and in its whole life, so that, as the Body of Christ, it may be a fit instrument for carrying out His gracious purposes in the world'. This makes it quite clear that external corporate unity must spring from spiritual unity. Unless we realise this spiritual unity and make in the basis of our outward unity, we shall fall short of the expectation of the founding fathers of the CSI.



We cannot but confess that the organisational unity we have achieved is not adequately inspired and informed by spiritual unity. No doubt, the Synod and its various committees and commission do make us feel that we are fellow-members of one Church. But to what extent does such a sense of belonging to one Church prevail in our Dioceses, congregations and individual members of the Church ? Our Dioceses and congregations are too much divided by internal quarrels, parties, factions, communalism and litigation. As long as this situation prevails, the world will not believe that our Church is truly united in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit and that we are one body in Jesus Christ. We deceive ourselves if we talk about the unity of the Church and do not reflect that unity in our local and individual situations. The unity of the Church, if it is founded on spiritual unity, should be seen in the unity of our local congregations and dioceses but not in our local divisions, rivalries and exclusiveness. In more positive terms, if the local congregations are truly united it must be expressed in and through their appreciation of the common heritage of the Church, namely, worship, the Eucharist witness and service. In short, unity should become integral to congregational life.

There is another dimension to the unity to which the CSI is committed. The unity achieved by the uniting Churches points on the one hand to their togetherness and on the other it refers to the secular world and its history. This unity is intended to make the CSI 'a fit instrument for carrying out His purposes in the world'. It implies that the unity of the CSI can be seen only when it goes out of its own circle to join up with the whole human community and participate in its struggles. In other words the Church and the world are closely interlinked. The mission of the Church in and to the world and the unity of the Church are the two sides of the same coin. One cannot exist without the other. So the Church of South India has a two-fold task. It should be involved in the on-going 'process of growing together into one life and of advance towards spiritual unity'. At the same time it should use the unity it has achieved as an instrument to serve more effectively the world and community amidst which it is situated. In order to fulfil these twin purposes the CSI should always remember and pray with our Lord : 'I do not pray for them only, but also for those who are to believe in me through their word, that they all may be one ; ever as Thou, father in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that Thou has sent me'.

Role of Women in CSI—An Evaluation

During the last 3 decades of Independence of our country, the status of women in the secular world has undergone a tremendous change. In the beginning there were hardly any women found in the government, Secretariat, Banks, Post offices, commercial firms etc. But today after 30 years, women are found in large numbers in all walks of life in our country. Compared to the secular world, we do not find the same change in the life of the Church as far as women are concerned. We do not see many women occupying responsible positions in the life and work of the Church. It is a matter of great sorrow that although women constitute more than 50% of the congregation in many Churches they have not been given an equal share in the administration or an opportunity to play equal roles in all spheres. The Synod was generous enough to pass a resolution that a certain minimum percentage of representation should be given to women. But when we come to the grass root level such as the pastorate committees, what a big fuss we make to give even one per cent representation to women. In some congregations, there is open opposition and reluctance to elect women to the pastorate committees, Diocesan Council and even to the Synod.

In spite of all this, women have been faithfully and quietly serving our Lord Jesus Christ in their own humble way. In almost all the Churches the attendance of women for worship service is more than of men. It is an indication they are more religious minded than men. But they should not be complacent about this, but should take more interest in the activities of the Church.

Soon after the inauguration of CSI in the year 1948 a few women leaders representing various Dioceses had a conference. After two days of prayer and discussion together, it was agreed that there was a real need and a great opportunity for one centrally organized Women's Fellowship which could include old, young, married and unmarried, educated and illiterate women bound together to be a witness to Christ and of service to His Church.

Under the auspices of Women's Fellowship, women from all over the seventeen Dioceses meet together every now and then for conferences, retreats, central committees, etc., as a result of which wider fellowship and growing oneness in Christ is felt more in the Church of South India by women rather than by men. A few women by joining the Sister Order of CSI dedicated their life in order to contribute fully to the life of the Church in various ways e.g., pastoral, evangelistic, educational, medical etc. Thus women are rendering their valuable service in the Church. A few recognise this and say 'Where the Women's Fellowship is, there

the Church lives'. Women have become a prayer community of the Church. They have learnt their responsibilities to know more about the Church activities unity of the Churches, the wider fellowship of coming together in the name of Jesus Christ. Women have grown in the mission of the Church. In some of the Women's Fellowship branches they have programme for the missionary work. They send out missionaries and support their work. Women can think and act on their own and take initiative in doing social work.

They have concern for not only their own sisters believers but also sisters of other faith. They have various projects to help the underprivileged and down trodden women and children. But these projects are in the very initial stages due to want of leaders. In order to overcome this drawback, leadership training programmes have been started. Women are learning to become self-reliant by raising funds to support their various activities.

A word about Vishranthi Nilayam in Bangalore is worth mentioning here, as it is the Central house of the Women's Fellowship and Mother House of the Women's Order. Not only are women's fellowship conferences and retreats are held here but also people of various Christian denominations make use of Vishranthi Nilayam for various meetings and retreats. It also serves as holiday home for Church workers. Visitors all over India and abroad come to stay here.

A few women are getting Theological training to equip themselves with the full knowledge required of Minister or a Presbyter. When we consider women as a whole person in Christ we cannot understand why there should be any objection in ordaining these women. As a matter of fact it is these women upon whom one could depend to go into villages to minister to people there.

A large number of our congregations are still in rural areas. In spite of compulsory primary education the illiteracy among these rural people is increasing. A large percentage of women in rural areas are still illiterate and so women are unable to take part in the life of the Church or in the Women's Fellowship organization. In the beginning there were adult education programmes sponsored by the National Christian Council and the Churches actively took part in these programmes. It is very unfortunate that National Christian Council has wound up this department of adult education and as a result of which the Churches also have become slack in the promotion of adult education.

In such situations, women from a few Women's Fellowship branches of the cities go to the villages and run Women's classes to uplift the women in the villages by way of regular systematic teaching from prescribed books specially prepared for them. This helps the village women irrespective of their caste and religion in their total development.

I would recommend that many women from the cities should take up this work among the village women. It is a pity that many educated women in the urban areas do not become Women's Fellowship members. They seem to be indifferent to this organization and hence they should be encouraged to participate in the

(Continued on page 4)

[SEPTEMBER 1979]

A Glimpse of the Youth in the CSI

'Young people are a strange lot, ask them little, they give you nothing, ask them much, they give you much!' The Church has hardly made any demands on young people; nor has it any faith in their potentialities. No wonder that they are heard and seen so rarely.

Young people within the Church are after all from the larger community and so they come into the Church with the same aspirations and the same conflicts. Being aware of the reality is in itself a first step at acceptance of people and their needs. This also means that the quality of their life and participation in the Church is an extension of the expression of their lives in society. They come with unbounded energies and unlimited resources. They come with questions and doubts. They come with conflicts, contradictions and dreams that are part of being young. They come in their continued search to become persons. They come seeking for a fellowship and sense of belonging. They come with strong conviction that right is right and wrong is wrong. How has the Church responded to young people in villages, towns and cities with their various requirements and skills?

Participation

When there are fund raising efforts, manual work, or decorating to be done or chairs to be arranged, then the young people are left to do their job. Yet what about participation in liturgy, participation in decision-making bodies, participation in the life and witness of the church? Except for sporadic cases of creative participation, generally participation is passive, doing-nothing or helping out on a very superficial level. Irrelevant liturgies and rituals are not conducive to foster and facilitate creative participation. The elders in the church generally replace the elders in the home and to keep fighting at every sphere is tiresome specially when no one listens! Allowing for participation at all levels is a difficult task, for it demands giving up some out-dated attitudes and allowing a new generation to contribute its worth. Participation means respect of people—their ideas, their expression and their zeal. The youth have in many churches felt strongly that the CSI order of worship is not relevant to the turmoil and struggle of life. It offers no space for proper congregational participation or creative worship. It does not confront realities and instead is habit forming and placid and forms an escape once a week from an hectic and problematic life.

Young people come with high ideals to the Church and are generally shocked and disillusioned by the politics and pettiness prevalent in church circles—that as a matter of fact is the only bit of social reality that creeps into the church! It wouldn't be surprising if the other socio-economic and political realities found a place in the life of the church, as that it could also be dealt with honesty and spiritual maturity.

Communication

The Church can communicate to young people only what they think or feel about their place in society.

They are either ordered or told to do something or left to themselves. The gaps in communication are vast. Sermons, lectures, circulars, requests all fall on deaf ears. Responsibility is hardly given to them for fear of mistakes, nor are they allowed to experiment and make mistakes! This brings us to consider leadership and self-reliance.

Leadership

Gone are the days of the rabbi to disciple type of leadership. Most congregations still rely on the priest or a few elders who are considered biblically enlightened to contribute leadership. This is a serious lack of respect for the qualities inherent in so many others. How can responsibility be encouraged and freedom understood? How can dependency give way to interdependency? At this point a lot of youth fight for independence as an option to dependence. That is surely not the answer either. Power and authority are glamourous possessions and people who hold and wield power are not willing to give it up easily. The vicious circle continues—'you wait for your turn and do as we did'.

The CSI has remained largely an exclusive 'church club' catering to the spiritual needs of its members. It is time we reached out in a more positive, creative and effective way to the community life within and without. This calls for spear heading in avenues which are hitherto untrod. Here is where young people can be encouraged. Even recalling the past thirty years since Independence, pretty little has been done in spheres of social action, political participation and support, new forms of education, different life-styles and images. There continue to be a negligent minority who are active in national life and community life. This minority has to increase. We have to organise ourselves with members of other faiths, so that all people may live with freedom and dignity. As the church seeks to become, to grow into fullness. She needs to cater to the needs of youth and train responsible leaders for tomorrow.

Unity

Church unity so far has little meaning in most young circles. What does church unity demand of its congregation spiritually, socially and financially? Is it only to be a common liturgy for all united churches? One of the outcomes of church unity was that people for the first time realised how very different the various churches were and how bitterly they opposed each other and tolerance takes a long, lone time! The enrichment of the various churches coming together in one body seems to be lacking. The sense of responsibility of richer churches for poorer churches is a rarity. Fellowship between congregations is in no way hindered, but neither is it encouraged. One of the better features is the exchange of priests for sermons and the celebrations of the communion. We certainly need to work towards oneness and the sense of belonging in spite of our fairly long history of unity.

Ms. LEKHA DANIEL.

Inauguration of the Social Ethics Programme

Inaugural Speech of

FR. L. SUNDARAM, S. J.

Madras Christian College (Autonomous), Tambaram has introduced an inter-disciplinary Course in Social Ethics which students of the second year Degree Classes have to take as part of their integrated curriculum. The following speech was delivered on the occasion of the inauguration of the course.

Education in India under the British depended largely on the work of private organizations especially Christian. But as rulers of a people with various religious faiths, the British, in order to maintain an air of impartiality would not make moral or religious instruction a part of the curricula followed. Private Managements were free to impart such instruction according to their own plan and convenience without interfering with the freedom of conscience of their pupils. Such a policy, intelligible no doubt in the light of historical circumstances, resulted naturally in an educational system in which moral and religious values were not given the place that was due to them. Since also the final academic assessment of students whether at the High School or University level was made without any relation to moral training or religious knowledge, it became increasingly difficult to impart these to the young.

Christian Schools and Colleges however, have tried their best to be true to their ideals in spite of parental indifference and student apathy towards such training. The lack of such training for the majority of students and the baneful consequences of it have been emphasised in the reports of all the important Educational Commissions appointed by Government in recent years. But in practice Universities and Colleges affiliated to them have been helpless and unable to implement a practical plan of action. In this context the significance of what we are doing today becomes evident.

Madras Christian College has been, across the years, one of the most effective and courageous witnesses in the field of Education, to moral values. The Institution has been inspired by the motto chosen by its founders : *In Hoc Signo Vinces*. The reference is of course to the story that when the forces of Constantine were converging on Rome held by the last defenders of the decayed and corrupt Empire, he saw a brightly lit Cross before him in the clouds with the legend underneath meaning. 'By this Sign you will conquer.' He conquered and became the first Christian Emperor of Rome putting an end to the era of persecution. Beyond the literal sense and limited application of the words, the motto is an inspiration

to all men of goodwill to accept the crosses, the difficulties and challenges of life without which true victory or success in any sphere of life is impossible. Madras Christian College has endeavoured to keep this ideal in all the service of teaching rendered here during nearly a century and a half. Entering a new era with the grant of autonomy from June 1978 the College has the freedom to fashion its own courses of study. Using this freedom and opportunity, a rightful and prominent place has been given now to the study of Social Ethics which is one of the Compulsory subjects in the degree courses. What the Government has been unable to do, the chance of autonomy has helped the College to do. And it may be noted that the syllabus framed after much thought and discussion in the light of past experience is calculated to emphasise the social dimension of all self-improvement, acquisition of knowledge and training.

The country needs not merely academically qualified graduates but men and women of true moral calibre capable of fighting against the corruptive influences which have been corroding and weakening our public life and newly won political freedom. As one who has had the privilege of working with the framers of the syllabus during the last year, I have much pleasure today in inaugurating the Course on Social Ethics and pray that all concerned, staff and students, may together reap the fruits it is intended to produce.

Role of Women—(Contd. from page 2)

activities of the Women's Fellowship. In this connection, some programme should be evolved to involve working women who do not find time to participate in the Women's Fellowship.

It is also recommended that a lot of study should be undertaken by the Women's Fellowship in order to equip themselves with the knowledge to do their work effectively. Women should be aware of all that is happening around them in the Church and in the Society regarding social, economic and political problems. Every congregation should be encouraged to start libraries where there are not only religious but also other useful books. Women should be given scholarships to go abroad to have a wider knowledge of the world.

A woman's first and foremost role is in her own home. If she neglects her home and tries to play a more important role in the Church or in the Society, it becomes meaningless. The basic unit of a Church or a Society is the family. In order to help the family, it is recommended that Christian Home Festivals should be revived and celebrated in every congregation of the CSI. It could either be a week's programme or a day's function.

The future programmes of the W.F. will consist of starting employment bureaus, counselling centres, Indian Fostership etc. But we would welcome our brothers who are willing, to work along with women. Why should women form a separate community themselves in the Church? In order that men and women may have equal involvement in the life of the Church, men who discriminate women due to their ignorance should be properly educated. One should look up to Jesus Christ for his guidance.

Ecumenism and Missionary Task of the Local Church

Introduction :

Christianity grew as a movement of a dozen peasants in an unimportant corner of the world. According to Luke, the author of the Acts of the Apostles, the Gospel has been progressively proclaimed from Judaea, Samaria, Asia and to the ends of the world. In spite of the many obstacles, persecutions and tribulations, Luke says at the end of his second volume that the proclamation about the Lord Jesus Christ was carried through 'quite openly and without hindrance' even in Rome, the Capital of the Empire. The winsome character of the movement attracted people from diverse traditions. With the power of the Holy Spirit many of the hindrances based on man made barriers of traditionalism, regionalism, and authoritarianism were overcome. This movement of God's people, called Christianity, claimed allegiance from people of all cultures and within 300 years of its existence it rose to the status of the official religion of the State. The differences due to traditions of Jews and Gentiles were removed with the deeper understanding of their part in the movement of God's people (Acts. 15). Philip was led to go into Samaria in order to proclaim the message of Our Lord (Acts. 8). The ecclesiastical authorities had to learn a great deal continuously so that they do not become stumbling-blocks to this growing movement of God. Peter had to accept the mission of God by going out to Joppa to join hands with the Gentile Cornelius (Acts 10). The apostles from Jerusalem went to Samaria and recognized the missionary task of Philip and other scattered evangelists (Acts 8). In other words, we do not come across anywhere in the New Testament that the Church was fully institutionalised and ceased to be a movement of God's people. The early Christians were convinced of their mission to go into all the world and proclaim the message of joy and love they had discovered in the newly growing movement of God's people who put their centre in Jesus Christ. They realized their task that they were sent into the world even as God the Father sent Jesus Christ into the world. Their unity only strengthened their witness to their Lord and Saviour in the whole world.

Unity and Mission are interwoven :

The great new fact of Ecumenism of our present Century has to go much deeper in the level of local congregations. It is not enough to clarify our theological positions and see how best we can be further strengthened in our unity. We have to seek new avenues of witness and service together. For about a decade, we have thought about Ecumenism in the parish level in Tambaram, and we used to have combined carol services or meetings on Good Fridays. This became rather artificial as years went by. Therefore, three years ago we, the clergy of different denominations,

about 15 of us, decided to meet one Saturday morning once in three months to share our experiences in the ministry. This get-together and sharing have added new dimensions to our ministry. There are ministers representing the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, the CSI, the Mar Thoma, the Orthodox, the Advent Mission and the Pentecostals. Last December, instead of the usual carol services, we planned to visit the patients in the local T.B. Hospital in their wards with sweets and message of comfort and joy. We had members from different congregations and we divided ourselves into four groups and met all the one thousand patients greeted them with sweet parcels and prayed for them in their wards. It was a great experience of unity and mission. All our congregations met one Sunday evening to clarify the implications of the Shri. O. P. Tyagi's proposed Freedom of Religion Bill and prayed for Arunachal Pradesh Christians and for right leadership at the Centre. The strength of our unity lies very much in our carrying out the mission of God for our time together. When we serve together for the sake of the needy and poor and when we are engaged in proclaiming the love of Jesus together with one voice, the strength of our witness could be understood in the proper perspective.

We have a few indigenous missionary movements such as NMS, IMS, FMPB, IEM having their statements of faith based on the scriptures of the Old and the New Testaments are the three historical creeds of the Church. They work with concern and love for people so that they would acknowledge Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and thereby become witnesses to Christ in the length and breadth of this country. Often-times we can notice a spirit of spontaneous unity among those engaged in missionary task. In these missionary organizations we come across people hailing from different denominational pursuits united for the task of proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ. I am sure that the passion for mission cuts across all barriers of divisions and brings people together. Thank God, for the organizational unity we witness in the CSI, CNI. In the same of spirit in which the Tranquebar Manifesto (1919) was written we should engage ourselves together with one mind in proclaiming and acknowledging 'Jesus as Lord' throughout this great land of ours. It is time for all of us to accept the Church as a movement of God and to recognize all new expressions of our faith and action without restricting the work with a spirit of authoritarianism just because these expressions do not fit into our known institutional slots. Unity and mission, Church and mission are always greatly interwoven. Let the Local Church continue to be a movement of the people of God, and not a monument!

REV. J. T. K. DANIEL,
Madras Christian College.

Forum on Bilateral Conversations Meets in Geneva

Geneva (EPS)—Twenty-eight representatives of Anglican, Orthodox, Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and confessional families engaged in bilateral conversations at the world level met in Geneva 5-9 June, 1979, to discuss their work. Msgr Basil Meeking, of the Vatican Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, chaired the meeting.

In a memorandum to the sponsoring bodies the participants observed that 'as communion grows among divided churches, common verbal articulation becomes possible' and they affirmed that 'Statements of consensus fulfil an irreplaceable function in the process of growing together.'

The Forum on Bilateral Conversations was set in motion by the Conference of Secretaries of the World Confessional Families and is administered by the Faith and Order Secretariat of the World Council of Churches (WCC). It is an instrument for common reflection on the progress of bilateral conversations and their relation to multilateral efforts. Its purpose is to facilitate an exchange of information among the churches and confessional families which conduct the conversations.

This second of three projected sessions of the Forum had as its theme the nature of consensus and the role of the joint statements in building consensus. Metropolitan Emilianos Timiadis, representative of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, opened the Forum with a paper on the nature of consensus. Father Pierre Duprey, Vatican, spoke on the role of joint statements in the quest for consensus. Dr. Lukas Vischer, WCC, spoke of the relationship of bilateral conversations and multilateral efforts. A series of papers surveyed the

statements so far issued. Dr. E. C. John, India, analysed the statements with regard to mission; Dr. Rudolf Thaut, Federal Republic of Germany, followed with a paper on baptism; Father Jozef Tomko, Vatican, on Theology of Marriage; Prof. J. K. S. Reid, Scotland, on Ministry; Prof. Georg Kretschmar, Federal Republic of Germany, on Eucharist, and Bishop Edward Knapp-Fisher, England, on Authority.

The survey of progress in bilateral conversations will assist the effort of the Faith and Order Commissions in the proposed revision of its agreed statements on baptism, eucharist and the ministry.

A memorandum of the work of the Forum is to be sent to the sponsoring bodies and to the churches and confessional families. The memorandum notes areas of convergence and also suggests the areas where further work needs to be done. A key section on 'Consensus and Common Confession of Faith' notes that 'efforts in both multilateral and bilateral conversations to formulate consensus on controversial issues are to be understood as contributions to that common mind which is required for confessing the faith together in both credal and contemporary terms.'

A continuation committee was appointed with the task of planning the third session of the forum. Rev. Dan Martensen of LWF was appointed moderator and Rev. Steve Cranford (WCC) as secretary. The third session is expected to discuss the issues related to the reception of the outcome of bilateral dialogues.

(Ecumenical Press Service)

Lutherans and Church Union

The participants have been representatives of the CSI and of the five South Indian Churches of the Lutheran Federation—two churches in Andhra Pradesh; Andhra ELC and South Andhra LC and three churches in Tamil Nadu and Kerala: the Tamil ELC, Arcot LC and India ELC. The IELC representatives participated as visitors until 1966, when as IELC became a constituent member of FELC, it became a full member of the Commission.

I CSI—Lutheran Joint Theological Commission

This Commission met six times, the first meeting being held in November 1951 and its last meeting in April 1959. A full statement on 'The Relation of Doctrinal and Confessional Statements to the Being of the Church', and a brief statement on 'The Lord's Supper' were published when the Baptists were participants. Regarding a doctrinal statement prepared for

the FELC, the CSI Commission agreed that the Lutheran Statement expressed the faith of the CSI also, but it needed to be recognised that the revelation in the Bible contained the truth in its fullness.

A large number of theological concerns was listed on which both sides prepared papers, and this discussion revealed how close each was to the other. Already, at the second meeting, the Commission recorded, 'We believe that the measure of doctrinal agreement... is such as to warrant closer fellowship than now exists between our churches.'

When 'The Law and the Gospel' and 'The Doctrine of Election' were considered at the third meeting in March, 1954, some division of opinion was feared, but in both matters agreed statements were accepted at that meeting. In March 1955, an agreed expanded statement on 'The Lord's Supper' was recorded. Both

churches believed in the 'Real Presence of the Lord' in the sacrament. The IELC, however, needed further discussion on the matter. At the fifth meeting in April 1956, unanimity on 'The Church and Its Ministry' seemed hard to reach. However the commission agreed to continue the conversations and to refer the agreed statements to Joint Regional Conferences in Telugu, Tamil and Malayalam areas. At the final Meeting in 1959, the Commission noted with satisfaction the work of the Regional Conferences. Further, an agreed statement on 'The Church and its Ministry' was accepted. Thereafter, the Joint Theological Commission declared that its work had been completed, and urged that a Joint Inter-Church Commission be constituted by the churches, so that the recommendations of the Joint Theological Commission be acted on by the churches and that other steps be taken to bring about the desired Church Union.

II CSI—Lutheran Inter-Church Commission

The first meeting of the Commission was held in August 1961. Altar and Pulpit fellowship were agreed to by the CSI and the FELC. As recommended by the Theological Commission at its 1959 meeting, a common Catechism for experimental use in the churches, a statement of the Faith of the Church and a draft Constitution for the new church engaged the attention of the early meetings of the Commission. After frequent revisions, the final text of the Catechism was approved at its seventh meeting. At the ninth meeting, the Basis of Faith and the draft constitution were approved. The Proposed Constitution was printed and issued in October 1969 for careful study by the dioceses and churches concerned.

At the tenth meeting in December 1973, the AELC and ALC as well as the CSI reported on their general acceptance of the Basis of Faith and the Constitution of the new Church. The meeting further noted the suggestions made by the CSI and FELC bodies for further study. Also, the report that the FELC recommended to the North Indian Churches of the FELC to start negotiations with the CNI was recorded with satisfaction.

At the eleventh meeting in September 1975, the Commission agreed on the implementation of the inauguration of the new church in two stages. More suggestions received from the churches were noted for further study. As a great deal of work yet awaits the Commission, more frequent meetings of the Commission will be needed.

Everyone participating in the commissions felt that God had guided them in arriving at their common decisions. In issuing the Proposed Constitution for the study of Churches concerned the officers of the Inter-Church Commission recorded that they 'have learnt much from one another and have been enriched by their fellowship together'. They further said, 'It is their prayer that God may lead their churches into unity which he wills'. The final article which deal with 'Achievements and to Works Still Ahead'.

REV. J. D. ASIRVATHAM, M.A.,
Courtesy: *The Christian Focus*.

'Let Your Children Know You Believe in Them'

If I had my children to raise again, I'd criticize less and complement more.

'My children are such a Joy to me' a mother told her pastor one day. 'They have made my life so much richer.'

'Have you told them that?' he asked. She said she had.

'How fortunate they are,' he then said 'It's the greatest gift you could ever give them, you know.'

I really feel sorry for children who grow up knowing nothing but criticism. They feel rejected.

Have you ever looked up the meaning of the word 'criticize'?

The dictionary says: 'To stress the faults of, blame, censure, denounce, rebuke, condemn.'

None of us likes to be criticized. It injures our self-esteem because we take it personally. Put yourself in your children's shoes. Would you appreciate it if some one paraded all your faults before the community?

I am becoming increasingly aware of how parents talk to and about their children. I am saddened to hear many derogatory remarks especially against teenagers. It injures them, sometimes permanently. Complaining about your children is unproductive and discouraging. I realize just how basic a parent's belief in a child really is.

A mother told me about over hearing her son telling his friends that he never really liked school. In fact, I never thought I would graduate. But Mum believed I would, so I did. Good parents believe in their children most when the children don't believe in themselves. What can be more—reassuring to a child than his parents who believe that he is going to make it some day?

One of the hardest lessons to learn is that God has given each of your children talents which are unique to them. Parents should nurture these talents instead of forcing their own ambitions on them. Don't Compare.

Tell your children too that you pray for them. Let them hear you pray for them in gratitude to God. Let them know they are worthy of God's notice.

God loves and believes in us as parents. Isn't it right that we do the same for our children?

CASA's Annual Report 1978

1978 has gone by and we have switched on to the new calendars. In this report CASA consciously reflects on its Development and Relief operations in the past year. This introspection of sorts lends a degree of sensitivity to our work thereby helping us to have a greater understanding of human suffering, compassion and pain. This Annual Report will enable us to share with our friends here and overseas as to the chronology of certain events and activities that took place in 1978.

We, as the auxiliary of the churches are guided by the 'needs' of the people. We go from one project to another, from one programme to another, keeping our basic aims, objectives and our programme priorities in mind. These sustain us along the tortuous road, until we reach our goal. The section of society whom we serve, knows only of their small world of want, need, hunger and poverty—the rest is inconsequential for them.

Our work in this ministry of social service is to help and assist the weaker sections of society (through regular development oriented programmes) thus enabling them to become self-reliant in order to earn their own livelihood, thereby developing a better socio-economic structure of the community at large—There's a famous—Chinese proverb 'Give a man a fish and he can eat for a day—Teach him to fish and he can eat for a lifetime'. As a development and relief agency in India, it would not be untoward to say that this proverb lends credence to our work, and describes our aim in a single sentence. Besides our regular programmes we do our share of relief work in the calamities which strike the nation from time to time, creating emergency situations. CASA's response to the unprecedented floods and other disasters of 1978 was immediate and effective in the realm of relief and rehabilitation for the affected victims.

A lot of water has passed under the bridge in the 12 months, beginning 1st January to 31st December 1978. I will share with you through this almanac most of the important events, our activities and our achievements of the preceding year. This report is not to inflate our egos and pride ourselves on the work, we, as the social arm of the churches are doing, by highlighting the goals we have achieved, but it is to let us know our short-comings and how to overcome them for future implementation in our ministry.

CASA during the last year has taken great care and has emphasised the need for development oriented programmes. It has focused its attention and potential towards projects for Social Justice, Self-Reliance, Rural Reconstruction, Education and Leadership Training programmes to create an awareness amongst the people, at the grass-root level.

CASA has side-tracked from the traditional 'beneficiary approach', to the development philosophy of

I.R.D. The non-agricultural groups, and the agricultural labour during the off-season have been given maximum opportunities to train themselves in different marketable skills. Cottage industries in many parts of India have been given a higher priority in our programmes. This is a major breakthrough in our efforts to find alternate job opportunities for the unemployed and the underemployed.

To quote an example of our Integrated Development Programmes, the Rajpipla area in District Broach of Gujarat depicts a pattern wherein our 'area approach' effort is suitably demonstrated through our projects which are being used in a total development of the tribals in this area. Initially only a housing programme was started, but as we worked in this area, an awareness of the basic problems of the tribals caught up with us and we became more and more involved in their welfare. Their emancipation from the money-lenders and land owners became our goal.

To this end CASA adopted a *Free Legal Aid Programme* in the Rajpipla area to enable the illiterate tribals and the underprivileged to fight for their rights and to inculcate in them respect for rule of law—But first and foremost it strove to make them aware of their rights, their legal status in relation to land and property laws, money-lenders and loans, besides helping them settle land-feuds and various other matters where legal aid is essential for the layman. CASA assists the tribals to obtain justice and procure rights granted to them by the existing laws and through Free Legal Aid Programme to contribute to the emancipation, of the weaker sections of society, from poverty, oppression and various sorts of exploitation. Until now, land worth Rs. 30,00,000 has been reclaimed and settled in the names of the rightful owners. This project is being managed by the Rajpipla Social Service Society.

Another project in this integrated rural development scheme is the project on *Economic Growth* which is also being managed by Rajpipla Social Service Society. CASA assists in the provision of Milch Cows/Buffaloes for the Adivasis of the Rajpipla area. Since food-production in the area is restricted, due to the lack of proper irrigation facilities, these adivasis (tribals), were subsisting on a very meagre income which they derived from the limited agricultural production of their land. This project was undertaken to provide a decent source of livelihood for these adivasis. CASA is assisting the Rajpipla Social Service Society by helping them to give collateral surety to the banks to provide loans to the adivasis for purchase of animals. CASA has provided a collateral of Rs. 1,00,000 to the banks which has resulted in loans upto Rs. 3,00,000 with which the tribals gradually become self-sufficient. They are slowly repaying instalments towards the loan. At present 150 families are being helped by providing this subsidiary source of income. The milk thus collected is marketed through the Rajpipla Marketing Co-operative Society to avoid further exploitation by the land owners and money-lenders of that area.

This development of a dairy on individual basis has generated sufficient employment opportunities and is a model for such other schemes.

Agricultural assistance by way of crop loans is also being made available to the tribals through Rajpipla Social Service Society. This will enable them to enhance agricultural production.

Besides the Free Legal Aid Programme and the dairy project, CASA is sponsoring, through the Rajpipla Social Service Society, a 'Housing Programme' in collaboration with the Government of Gujarat. 1000 marginal farmers will be benefiting from this scheme. 50% of the total cost is being borne by the Government of Gujarat.

A 'Mass Education Programme' is being conducted to bring in an awareness among the tribal youth. Many cottage industries have been identified in which tribals can get training for self-employment. It is communicated to the tribals as to how lack of technical qualifications are a handicap in missing available opportunities created by different public enterprises—To meet this need, a *Technical Education Centre* has been created to give technical education for the tribal youth—All these programmes are being managed by the Rajpipla Social Service Society.

Training in Development and Leadership Training of the grass-root level workers, CASA staff, project holders and CASA's Youth Wing members, (mostly students) is another virgin area which has been explored.

The training programmes in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras zones have given an opportunity for the grass-root level workers to reflect on latest development thinking.

The training programmes for the field workers of CASA has greatly improved the attitude, involvement and approach of CASA staff in identifying right priorities in the needy areas.

The Project Management In-service Staff Training Project has been started on a two-year basis to increase the quality, effectiveness and impact of CASA assisted projects in India. A qualified trainer is assisting us on a six-month basis in each of the zones to increase the capacity of the respective area programme and field staff to design, implement and evaluate development projects, and increase the quality, quantity, diversity and relevance of the knowledge, skills, techniques and lessons of experience of the programme and field staff, for providing project management assistance to local contact persons, project holders and agencies responsible for CASA assisted projects in the respective zones.

Different youth leadership camps in Andhra Pradesh, Calcutta and Shillong have been organized to motivate and mobilize youth in the country. These work-camps are being conducted to train youth to actively participate in development programmes and to prepare themselves to meet and respond to any emergency situation.

Promotion of *Marketable Skills* is a very important aspect of development, especially at the grass-root level, where cheap, locally available raw material can be transformed into many marketable items—CASA is assisting the landless labourers of Tamilnadu in developing these alternate employment schemes for them. Cottage industries, have been started to promote palm-leaf handicrafts in Chingleput and Ramnad districts, besides encouraging production of other popular industries like carpet-making, wood-carving, tailoring, lace-making, soap-making etc.

Besides involving ourselves in the self-reliance projects for the underprivileged, we also work for the

rehabilitation of the handicapped. These projects are implemented with great understanding and compassion for the deprived. One such example, of this endeavour is the rehabilitation programme of deaf and dumb children in Ghaziabad/Uttar Pradesh managed by Asha Vidyalaya. CASA is channelling funds to the institution to purchase the basic educational aids to enable the deaf-mutes to become educated and trained, and thus be in a competitive calibre with the normal people for existing job opportunities—thereby putting them on the road to self-reliance.

Two major disasters made significant impact on CASA's programmes during the year 1978, namely, the late—1977 cyclone in South India and the major floods in North India during the monsoon season. Many of CASA's Senior and Field Staff were directly involved in the immediate relief and rehabilitation work in Andhra Pradesh, Tamilnadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Orissa and Delhi following the Cyclone and flood damage in these areas. CASA has made an effort to involve the local groups in implementing the Rehabilitation and Reconstruction programmes in our post-disaster response activities. As part of CASA's disaster response programmes, we provided financial and advisory assistance to local groups to enable them to respond to the immediate relief needs of the affected victims rather than displacing staff from regular tasks and thereby avoiding a significant disruption of CASA's programmes. It was not possible to take this approach in each place, but the fact that it was done in some places gave us experience to encourage the local groups to mobilize their own resources and make CASA assistance more effective in disaster areas.

During the year 1978 two departments have been formed at the National level, one is the Material Resource Department and the other is the Emergency Cell. After the reorganization and reshuffling of the Material Aid Section, a new department came into being, called—'The Material Resource Department'. This department covers all the Material Aid activities ranging from import services to shipments—under its Import Section. And also handles all deemed exports under the Government of India's Export Purchase Scheme, wherein purchases, made in India, in foreign exchange are considered as exports. This is being done in close collaboration with W.E.M., W. Germany. This has enabled CASA to assist institutions in India to procure Indian products which had formerly been imported. This provides the ultimate recipient institution with a better export quality Indian made product at a much lower price since such export goods are exempted from excise and various other taxes.

To meet disasters with immediate response programmes and relief measures, it was decided to create an Emergency Cell at the Head Office to respond to emergency situations in the country. The purpose of this department is two-fold—With the formation of this Cell the regular on-going programmes are not disrupted and immediate relief is rendered to the affected victims.

During the last year, CASA has continued to relate to international ecumenical agencies primarily through the World Council of Churches, though some bilateral relationships have also continued. The major issues affecting these relationships is a decision of the Asia

(Continued on page 12)

Discussions on Unity

A World Council of Churches conference panelist declared that the issues of Christian unity and human justice are the same, and he chided Third World church leaders to witness more to the west about the unity they already have.

A Pakistani representative immediately responded that the disunity of western churches makes it impossible to know whom to witness to, adding that western Christians won't listen anyway.

The exchange took place at a unique two-day consultation of American church leaders and the World Council unit which handles its \$ 30-million a year disaster, refugee and inter-church aid operations.

At the conference of the WCC's Commission on Inter-Church Aid, Refugee and World Service (CICARWS), a panel was discussing whether service projects further or hinder the cause of unity. Participation in development of human resources in Africa and Latin America in recent years has brought Christians in conflict with governments and often with each other.

Disastrous Separation

The Rev. Dr. Paul A. Crow, Jr. of Indianapolis, Indiana, a member of the Central Committee of the World Council, declared that it is 'disastrous' to separate Christian unity and human justice.

'If justice is to come by way of the church,' he said, 'we must be led to confront our own participation in the division of mankind.'

Dr. Crow said, further that ecumenical structures tend to perpetuate denominationalism and preserve disunity. 'Collaboration is not unity', he observed.

The power, he said, remains back home in the denominations, the ecumenical effort always is a secondary one, and funding patterns are protected from real sharing.

Who To Witness To?

But when Dr. Crow criticised the Third World for neglecting its witness to unity, Dr. Anwar Barkat of Pakistan, also a member of the Central Committee, took issue, saying that the church in the west is so divided it is 'impossible' to determine who to witness to, and

western Christians continue in the same patterns as always no matter what they hear.

The panel was chaired by the Rev. William Howard, President of the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA.

The Rev. Dr. Paul McCleary, executive director of the US Church World Service, expressed the view that service operations do further the cause of unity if they bring denominations together as a visible sign of unity, if they are done in harmony with the other dimensions of the church, and if they affirm the church in each place.

Mrs. Doreen Kirby, a CICARWS Commissioner from Jamaica, observed that the churches must listen before they proclaim and must not forget that their service is Christian service.

Ice-Breaker

The Rev. Samuel Habib of Egypt, also a Commissioner noted that service has been the ice-breaker in the Middle East between Moslems and Christians.

The CICARWS consultation, in which some 75 persons participated, included major discussion on the ecumenical sharing of resources, the current state of affairs in the Middle East, Southern Africa, and on human rights, financing inter-church aid, and world hunger.

Mr. Jean Fischer of Geneva, Switzerland, director of CICARWS, told the conference that the church must not become another power but must help sustain people's hope in the struggle for a different world.

He said that inter-church aid, which grew out of the post-World War I need to rebuild European churches, had become involved increasingly in development. The objective is not to restore but install a different kind of world order, he said.

Break Barriers

The Rev. William A. Perkins, who directs the WCC's study on the Ecumenical Sharing of Resources, told the conference that Americans haven't a lot of experience in receiving a factor that is important if ever ecumenical sharing is to be genuine, breaking the barriers of dominance and dependency.

Mr. Paul Cushing, of the Domestic Programme Office for the US Government Co-ordinator for Refugee Affairs, declared that the churches play an important role in 'keeping us honest' in commitment to resettling a larger number of refugees in the United States.

He said a proposed new law would permit 50,000 refugees into the US each year but would give the President power to increase the number and would make them permanent residents as of the first day of entry without waiting.

(Courtesy : Ecumenical Press Service.)

Letters to the Editor

CHRISTIANITY AND BUDDHISM

Religion went underground in China 30 years ago when Communists took over. Of the religions that prevailed in China before that, Islam appears to have survived strongest, while Taoism, the Country's ancient religion, Christianity and Buddhism also still exist. The country's new constitution contains a law of religious liberty, and there is now a *minister for minority religions, to protect them*. People are not prevented from worshipping; in Shanghai services are still held at a Roman Catholic Cathedral; and an *Anglican Church, which had fallen into disrepair, is now renovated by the State*.

On a peak in Hong Kong, known as Tao Fung Shan, meaning the mountain of the Christ, Stands a Christian Church in the form of a Buddhist temple. Thousands of Buddhist monks leaving China have been coming here over the years. *There always existed perfect Communion between the Buddhists and Christians in China.* Many of them joined the 'Christ Temple', and took to Christianity as the duck takes to water. Pastors, Monks, trained in Fung Shan-Christ Temple, work today in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore and Malaysia without let or hindrance. Work at Tao Fung Shan has been adapted to changed circumstances, with a mission to Buddhists being carried on through out South East Asia. *It is the former Buddhist monks who have produced literature to guide other Buddhists in Christianity, and at the same time arrange for the study of Taoism.*

The Peace and the serenity of the mission of Christ Temple, on a mountain top, overlooking the bustle of the new town of Shatin, has made it a tourist attraction where guests can stay in the monastery. It is an ideal place for retreat where the birds sing, the butterflies dance and the real world seems far away.

There is a revival of interest in religion inside China and there is a new relaxed attitude towards Christianity and religion.

A Norwegian Missionary, Karl Ludwig Reicheit, built the Christ temple, the monastery and the mission, and erected the stark white cross which can be seen from a great distance. Buddhism made a great impact on him and he assimilated it and absorbed it into his own faith. About a thousand Buddhist monks a year came in those early years and joined Reicheit. Reicheit believed, 'BEAMS OF LIGHT WERE TO BE FOUND IN ALL RELIGIONS AND THAT WAS THE POINT OF CONTACT, BRIDGE AND STEPPING STONE BETWEEN RELIGIONS.'

DR. I. E. J. DAVID

New Colony,
Nagpur-440 001,
India.

Sir,

There appeared a press release in 1978 November issue of *The Churchman* by Dr. J. R. Chandran on page 4. It says 'It was noted that already at the First meeting of the Joint Council held at Nagpur last July, it had been recorded, in the preamble of the draft constitution that the three churches recognised themselves as belonging to the one church of Jesus Christ in India'. But recently these appeared a news item in a Leading Malayalam daily, *Malayala Manorama*, regarding the discussion the leaders of the C.N.I., C.S.I. and Mar Thoma Church had at Charalkunnu, in Kerala in May 1979. It said that the constitution of the Mar Thoma Church does not permit the church to unite with the other Churches in a new name. These two statements are contradictory and confusing to the ordinary members of the church. To put it frankly, the constitution argument of the Mar Thoma Church sounds peculiar. Earlier the 'Sabha Mandalam' of the said church passed a similar resolution on this background one may ask what is the meaning of the observance of the Festival of unity the churches had on 12th Nov. 1978, at various centres.

May I point out that, why this constitutional hindrance to union was not pointed out at the beginning by Rev. Dr. V. P. Thomas, who submitted a paper at Bangalore on Mar Thoma Church's stand on Union Negotiations. Add to that the late Metropolitan of the 'Mar Thoma Church' Dr. Juhanon Marthoma, in one of his books *Ormakalum Kurippukalum* stated that the Mar Thoma Church should be prepared to be united with other Churches in India in one name. Can we say that the venerable Late Metropolitan made this Statement without knowing the pros and cons of the constitution of the Mar Thoma Church? Then what is the Meaning of the Constitutional argument?

The constitutional argument of the 'Mar Thoma Church' reveals that it is not ready to unite with the other churches in a New Name. If it is so, why Dr. Chandran says about a Draft Constitution in his press release dated 11th October 1978. Does it mean that the Draft Constitution is for C.N.I. and C.S.I. only. This raises another doubt that the constitution of the C.N.I. and C.S.I. are decorative in character and too loose in effect, when compared with the constitution of the Mar Thoma Church. The constitutional argument of the Mar Thoma Church reminds the action of the Mar Thoma Church which came away from Union negotiations, after taking part in the union talks, after the 'Lambath Conference'. The constitutional argument forces one to think that the present negotiations are not the work of the Holy Spirit. But they are to earn prestige and name to certain individuals at W.C.C. level. So they are trying to have Union by any means one can conceive of. It would be harmful in the Long run.

Can C.S.I. agree to the constitutional argument of the Mar Thoma Church. The C.S.I. Synod appointed a

special Committee to look into the life and work of the C.S.I. after 30 years. The Committee said 'one of the most significant factors responsible for the rise of the church union movement in India was the desire on the part of the churches in India to shed their denominational and missionary affiliations and become an Indian Church. All the churches that united to form the C.S.I. shared this concern and desire' (Church of South India, after 30 years Chapter 4. Page 37). The Committee clearly states the thinking of the C.S.I. with regard to union. C.S.I. is for union. But it is not entering into union to create and to maintain denominational feeling among the constituent churches. But Mar Thoma church is aspiring for a union without giving up the individuality of the constituent churches. This is against the declared policy of C.S.I. on union in the light of the report of the Synod committee. How can it C.S.I. go against it and enter into a union which is different in nature—Federation of Churches? If Mar Thoma Church's constitution is against a union in one name, can the C.N.I. and C.S.I., which formed out of union, of churches, after shedding the denominational affiliations of the constituent churches, go back to denominational individuality? It is suicidal to the churches concerned and contradiction in terms.

The N.C.C. and its regional councils are better than the union dreamt of by the Mar Thoma Church because it is more wider and ecumenical in spirit. So let us act through it instead of wasting time, talent, and resources for such a union talk, which is based on big brotherly attitude. Union is the act of Holy Spirit, not man-made.

REV. M. T. THARYAN,
C.S.I. Parish,
Dubai.
Dated : 3-7-1979.

Announcement

The Nineteenth Assembly of the NCC of India

The Nineteenth Assembly of the National Christian Council of India is scheduled to meet at St. Stephen's College, Delhi from October 4th to 9th, 1979. The theme of the Assembly is 'Seek the Lord and Live'. A study book is under preparation the title of which, 'Seeking Christ in India Today', is an adaptation of the theme of the Assembly.

The forthcoming Assembly will be important. Never before has the NCCI held an Assembly in Delhi, the Capital of India. It is the first Assembly of the reformed and orthodox churches after the massive demonstrations by Indian Christians in the defence of the freedom of conscience threatened by Shri Tyagi's bill in Parliament. At this Assembly the Council's Constitution is expected to be substantially changed, for being updated, for determining new directions for the Council's future involvements, and for transferring the Council into the Council of Churches in India. Representatives from 23 different member churches, 14 Regional Christian Councils, 16 all India organizations, and several fraternal

delegates from overseas will meet to share life and thinking to recommend a new thrust for the Council in its service to the churches and the people of our country. Please pray that the Council may know the leading of the Holy Spirit now, during the Assembly and after, to be a willing and ready instrument of witness to Christ's redemptive love.

M. A. Z. ROLSTON,
General Secretary.

CASA's Annual Report—(Continued from page 9)

Regional Group of the WCC during the year to gradually reduce the amount of support it is willing to recommend for CASA's administrative budget. This is based on the WCC and ARG's understanding of self-reliance and more specifically on their hesitance to recognize the potential of food resources for supporting development goals. CASA has made significant gains in mobilising resources from within India. During 1978, a total income of more than Rs. 6 lakhs came from within India, compared with less than Rs. 1 lakh in the previous year. Though this gain is a source of pride for CASA, it will not be enough to enable CASA to continue its administrative expenditure, at the same level without finding additional sources within India, plans for which are already being implemented. This is a primary issue to which CASA's management will continue to devote substantial attention.

CASA being the Auxiliary of the churches has the churches' active involvement and support in all its rural development and reconstruction programmes and emergencies. All steps concerning policy matters, selection of personnel, etc., (for CASA programmes) are taken after due consideration and consultation with church leaders. The collaboration and co-operation of the churches in India has not only helped CASA in its programmes and activities, but has also played a vital role in its drive for self-support in the sphere of administration.

Due to CASA's liaison with the State and Central Government officials in every sphere of activity undertaken by it, a better understanding has resulted; therefore help and co-operation from these sources is always forthcoming.

This auxiliary of the churches' is deeply concerned with the conscientization and liberation of man from the injustices that have created the imbalances between the rich and poor. It enables the weaker sections of society, to develop the means to meet their basic needs, thus creating in them a social, economic and political awareness. This in turn will result in the birth of a self-sufficient community, which would be of the people, for the people and by the people.

I will take this opportunity to convey to all the churches, institutions, friends and members of the CASA family that the successful implementation of all CASA programmes and our achievements would still have been a mirage had it not been for joint efforts of all concerned.

J. K. MICHAEL,
Director.

news from —

THE DIOCESES



MADRAS DIOCESE

WOMEN'S BOARD CONVENOR'S REPORT

It is with much gratitude to God I present this report. The Lord in His abundant mercies has blessed the women's work further to His Glory. My sincere thanks are also due to all the Churches for their generous giving and active co-operation. This is the 9th year God has enabled us to observe the Women's Work Sunday and I thank everyone of you for your prayers and support.

This year being the International Year of the Child, the theme chosen is :

'Take this child away and nurse him for me'—
(Ex. 2 : 9).

This command no doubt is given by the princess to the mother of Moses, but it is equally applicable to us today. Most of us are entrusted with children and it is our bounden duty to nurse them for Him to further His mission and to His Glory. In this task of bringing up a new community in Christ, we are partners with Him and this should be the priority for the Women's Fellowship for this year. May the Lord to whom children are so near and dear help us to serve them better.

As you are aware, the Board of Women's work consider their work among the poor Women and children in the village of vital importance. This programme is being carried out by our full-time Diocesan Women Workers in several rural centres, more and more effectively. The rural centres are : Madurantakam, Arkonam, Sholinghur, Kancheepuram and Ikkadu, and the D. W. Ws are also assisted by helpers. Every year the Board prepares a new syllabus book which contains stories from the Bible, verses for memorising, lyric and chorus, hygiene, hand-work, recipes for cooking, etc. This year we have also introduced one or two Asanas (Yoga exercises) which will be beneficial for the village women, not only to maintain health, but also to meditate. By the end of the year they are given a test in most of these subjects and Certifi-

cates of merit are issued as a means of encouragement. Further, the illiterates in the village who are interested are also taught to read and write. This enables them to read the Bible.

The great commission was 'to make' disciples of all nations (Matt. 28 : 19). By the village women's class many non-Christians are also benefited. For instance, in Madurantakam pastorate where Sister Angella Ponniah and Miss Mercy Leelabai are serving, out of 1,100 women in the class, over 300 are non-Christians (about 30%). Thus the D. W. Ws are very much involved in evangelism.

So also, young girls both Christian and non-Christian families are given training in useful vocations such as, tailoring, embroidery and bag/doll/basket-making, thus extending our work beyond the narrow limits of religion and/or class. In tailoring and embroidery they are sent for Lower and Higher Grade Exams but, the stress is on self-employment. These courses are popular and the numbers are steadily increasing.

Some of you would have observed a small building for the long awaited Martha Canteen. Evangelistic work through this canteen, which will sell good clean food at reasonable prices, will be a new sphere of activity for the Women's Fellowship this year. It is amazing how the Lord helped us to start this new venture, removing the earlier hurdles, and we seek your help and co-operation in making this a success.

It was given to some representatives of the Madras Diocesan Women's Fellowship to partake in the 30th Anniversary of the CSI Women's Fellowship at Nagercoil. The theme of this Conference was 'New Community in Christ'; Nineteen Dioceses were represented. Let us praise God for His abundant mercies for building up this fellowship of women throughout His church to His greater glory.

As most of you are aware, our Bishop and Mrs. Clarke are now away in the United States of America. Though they are over 6,000 miles away, their thoughts are very much with us today. Let us uphold them in our prayers. Our prayers are also for Mrs. John Wesley who as Vimala Williams, did excellent work in Sholinghur, as one of our D. W. Ws. I am sure that God will bless her in her new role as an 'Iyer Ammal'. Your prayers are also solicited for Miss Mercy Leelabai, one of our D. W. Ws. who has been sponsored by us for training in the Theological Seminary at Arasaradi, and Miss Daisy Padmini, M.A.B.D., who has recently joined our team of workers. We have made these sponsorships and appointments knowing fully well that any additional expenses on such necessities will always be forthcoming from you.

We are grateful to all the churches, friends and donors for their liberal giving. The total contribution last year was Rs. 14,377.58. Our target still remains at Rs. 20,000. With your help and co-operation we are hopeful of meeting this target amount at least this year. Even as our work is growing more and more funds are required. Therefore, I appeal to everyone of you to support our work this year all the more generously.

Thanking you and with my prayers.

JASMINE BALRAJ.

TAMILNAD CHRISTIAN COUNCIL ECONOMIC LIFE COMMITTEE

Progress Report of the Director for the period from 1-1-1979 to 30-6-1979

I have great pleasure in sending you our Progress Report for the half-year period ended 30th June, 1979 which covers all the activities of our Organization. Although it is usual for me to send Quarterly Reports, I could not do it this time owing to unavoidable circumstances. But now I am presenting a detailed report of all our activities during the period under review and our future programmes.

I. Minor Irrigation Programme :

Minor Irrigation Programme, viz., the Wells/Pumpsets Programme as planned was continued and in the sheet enclosed, you will find the amounts disbursed as loans and the recoveries made through repayments and the loans outstandings as on 30-6-79.

The present Wells/Pumpsets Programme (130 Wells/130 Pumpsets) is being implemented in the following areas and the following data will give an idea about its progress :

	Wells/Pumpsets	
1. CSI—Tirunelveli Diocese	5	10
2. CSI—Coimbatore Diocese, (Erode, Attur and Dharmapuri areas)	16	16
3. ALC—Tiruvannamalai	4	5
4. CSI—Vellore Diocese, Gingee	3	5
5. CSI—Vellore Diocese, Chittor	5	6
6. TELC—Pandur	2	2
Total	35	44

The work relating to this programme is being carried on and we hope to proceed further during the coming months. There were some delays on account of the time taken for the selection of the farmers by the local Churches/Dioceses.

As usual the first two wells programmes—(100 Wells/150 Pumpsets—69-2-7 and 120 Wells/120 Pumpsets—72-4-13) are being followed up and the repayments are also received.

II. Rural Service Centres Programme :

As reported in our previous report the 6 Rural Service Centre Programme is being directly implemented by us. But now with the co-financing of the Indian Bank, the repayments of the programme are deposited into the bank and the programme is implemented with the co-financing of the bank. So also the 3 Rural Service Centre Programme is implemented with the co-financing of the bank.

At the time when this programme was initiated, the response was not so encouraging as the farmers were a little hesitant to receive the loan through the bank. But now after having got used to this system, they are regular in going in for the crop loan through the bank.

The margin money deposited by us in the bank, is kept as the Collateral Security for the loan and therefore

enough care is taken by our Field Staff with regard to the selection of the beneficiaries as well as recoveries of the loans. Once again I wish to confirm that our help through the Short Term Crop Loan Programme reaches, only the small and marginal farmers whose land holdings are below 3 acres. With the co-financing of the bank, it is hoped to cover larger areas in future.

III. Housing Programme for the Rain, Flood and Cyclone Victims :

The construction of the 600 houses mostly for the landless people was completed in all the areas. In the Vedasandur area, where the 70 houses were constructed through the Tamilnadu Theological Seminary with our grant, there was some delay and for that reason the dedication of the houses as proposed to be held in June had to be postponed to some time during August or September.

We are thankful to the following church leaders who had kindly consented to dedicate the houses, and in the following places :—

Rev. Dr. Thomas Edward	..	Ambur
Rt. Rev. Jayaseelan Jacob	..	Pudukkottai
Rt. Rev. Dr. Pothirajulu	..	Oddanchatram (Bethelupuram)
Rev. Dorairaj Peter	..	Thyagadurgam
Rt. Rev. Daniel Abraham	..	Tirunelveli
Rt. Rev. Solomon Doraiswamy	..	Thiruvarur : Nagapattinam : Keeranoor— (Perambalur)

We have now submitted another Project Proposal to our donors for the construction of 1000 houses for the landless people through all our Rural Service Centres at the following places, viz., Chingleput; Thirukoilur; Trichy; Madurai; Tirunelveli; Nagercoil; Erode; Attur; Dharmapuri and Chittoor.

In addition, we plan to build 200 houses in the IELC—Ambur area, particularly for the victims of the Palar flash floods. This particular project will be undertaken with the help of the Lutheran World Federation. I am happy to report that the UELCI have given their approval to our request and we are thankful to Rev. Dr. Thomas Edward for the initiative he has taken in this matter.

IV. Other Programmes :

(a) At present we are implementing through the CASA—FEW Programme the following undertakings in the Chingleput area :—

- Sinking of Community Drinking Water Wells at : Madayathur; Chithamur; Kannapet; Alappakkam; Karumbakkam.
- Desilting and strengthening of bunds and repairing of Irrigation tanks and ponds at : Sirukundram; Overtonpet; Sembakkam; Ammanambakkam; Thandarai; Viralpakkam; Karumbakkam; Andrewapuram; and Poolielpadi.

(This will help to irrigate about 820 acres of lands. About 630 workers work each day and the work may be completed in 2½ to 3 months period.)

(b) We have submitted another request for a CASA—FFW—Programme to be taken up through our Chittoor Rural Service Centre.

This plans to reclaim 150 acres of barren lands assigned by the Government to 145 landless agricultural labourers. It will be followed up with a comprehensive programme to help irrigating the lands ; to form a collective Co-operative Society so as to share the water from irrigation wells. (About 15 common irrigation wells are planned to be dug.) Then later on we shall through Our Wells/Pumpsets and Crop Loan Programme help the beneficiaries with their cultivation work.

We have also submitted a few more requests to CASA for carrying out our undertakings through FFW—Programme in the following areas.

- (1) IELC—Ambur Synod area—V. Kotta Village.
- (2) TELC—Land Development Programme near Cuddalore for Ex-Army people.
- (3) General request for deepening of wells in the Attur ; Thirukoilur ; Arruppukottai and Palayamkottai areas through our Rural Service Centre Programme.

(c) Our proposal to the LWF, Geneva for implementing Cottage and Small Industries Programmes is under consideration by the CDS of LWF. This programme will be implemented with the co-financing of the State Bank of India. To begin with, we intend taking up the Cottage Industries Programme at six of our Rural Service Centres, viz., Chingleput ; Arruppukottai ; Palayamkottai ; Thirukoilur ; Attur and Ambur. Through this programme we plan to help the rural artisans particularly the landless poor and the unemployed youth in the villages.

(d) We have now taken up the Community Drinking Wells Programme in those places where we have constructed the houses for the flood and cyclone victims UMCOR (United Methodist Committee on Relief) has agreed to help partly for digging and constructing 4 Community Drinking Wells at the following places :

Keeranoor ; (Perambalur) Christianalpuram (Dharapuram) ; Bethelpuram (Oddanchatram) and Thyagadurgam. We hope that in future we shall take up this community Drinking Wells Programme in other areas too.

(e) The Rural Appropriate Technology Programme which aims at the use of natural energies such as solar, wind, bio-gas and muscle power, will be undertaken by us from the year 1980 soon after Dr. Job Ebenezer comes to India. It is planned to establish a Rural Appropriate Technology Centre and the results of the experiments carried out shall be communicated to the farmer through our Rural Service Centres and suitable training will be imparted to them. To organise and take up the work, we have requested Dr. Job Ebenezer to obtain necessary grants from the churches and other agencies in U.S.A.

(f) The other activities which we plan to take up are the establishment of the seed Production Farm-cum-Extension Centres and to help the landless people through animal husbandry.

In this connection we are happy to report that already a programme has been worked out for establishing a farm near Thinnanur of the Madras Diocese. Similarly we plan to work out a programme for the lands near Attur belonging to the CSI Coimbatore Diocese.

(g) We have received a request from St. John's College, Palayamkottai for the construction of 22 houses for the snake-charmers and another from the Tirunelveli Diocese for the construction of one drinking water tank in the housing colony of stone cutters at Tuckerammalpuram. We hope to help them once we receive grants from our donors.

Now let me express my gratitude to all our donors both in the country and abroad for their valuable help to implement these programmes for the benefit of the needy people in our country.

I am particularly thankful to the Central Agency, Bonn, for their continuous and valuable financial assistance and also to LWF, Geneva, CASA and UMCOR. I must also express my gratitude to all our Officers, Convener and members of our Economic Life Committee and Executive Committee and all the leaders and the heads of the churches and Dioceses for their kind co-operation that they have extended to our staff.

We do hope that trusting in His strength and grace we shall look forward to the future with courage and discharge our responsibilities to the best of our ability. And also we are grateful to God our Heavenly Father for all His help, guidance, strength and wisdom. In all humility we offer our feasible efforts at His feet and bow before Him to forgive our shortcomings and grant us guidance in the years to come, praying to Him that He may keep us always alive to our motto...

‘Ye Have Done it unto Me’.
May His name be glorified !

MITHRA J. EBENEZER,
Director.

Notice

INDIA SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION

‘International Year of the Child 1979’

WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY 1979

on Sunday, November 4

BOOKLET : ‘CHILDREN ARE THE HERITAGE OF THE LORD

For use by all Sunday Schools in India. Prepared and developed by Mr. Michael Vijaya Rao who heads the Brindavan Public School, Nilgiris. The theme of the booklet is exciting ; points to a new era for the younger generation over the world. The author presents it vigorously. The United Nations Organisation (U.N.O.) challenges us to look at this new age, so to enrich the turbulent future with Christlike deep concern for children everywhere.

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Write to :

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India Sunday School Union,
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Tamil Nadu.

Notices

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Qualifications : A graduate from a recognized university preferably a Chartered Accountant or with practical experience of keeping accounts, trained or experienced in personnel management, capable of supervising, maintenance of office, equipments, vehicles etc.

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Selected candidate will be on probation for one year and if found satisfactory, will be appointed on a contract basis for a period of 3 years. Contract is renewable if his performance is found satisfactory.

Apply giving a detailed bio-data, testimonials from two church leaders and a passport size photograph to :

THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
World Vision of India,
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WORLD SUNDAY SCHOOL DAY

November 4, 1979

The Christian Education Department of the Evangelical Fellowship of India (CEIFI) has published a drama entitled 'DRAWN OUT' in relation to the International Year of the Child. The drama is available both in Hindi and English at

CEIFI Supply Centre,
C. P. Compound,
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The Announcement

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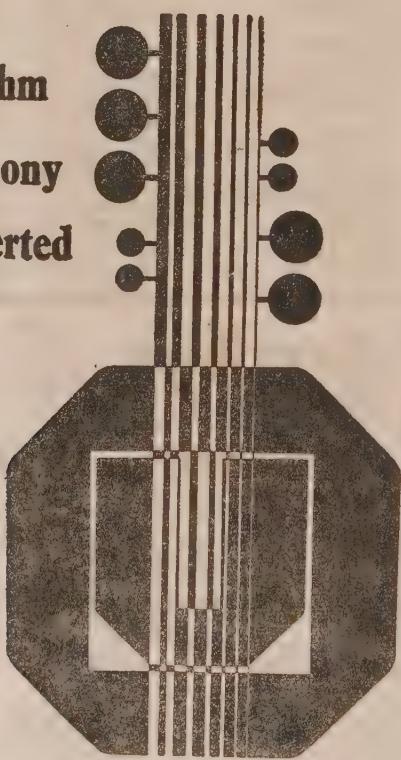
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